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MEMORIAL

Of the Medical Society of the County of Erie to the Medical Profession of the State of New York.

In asking the coöperation of the medical profession, in the effort to secure the passage of the proposed Act to establish the Medical Faculty of the State of New York, we deem it expedient that the attention of each member of the Legislature be suitably directed to the following facts :

1. That the present system of licensing physicians does not command the respect and confidence of either the profession or the people.
2. That the cardinal defect in that system is the fact that diplomas of medical colleges are licenses to practice medicine.
3. That, as a general rule, medical colleges are private corporations, operated by, and in the interests of, a few individuals, whose personal and pecuniary interests—acting with the tendencies of competition—have brought about a state of affairs in which a diploma has practically ceased to furnish any reasonable presumption of respectable professional acquirement.
4. That the graduates from the medical schools of this country, during the year last past, were nearly four thousand in number (3,979), being more than the number graduated during the same period by all the medical schools of the whole British Empire, France, Austria and Germany combined.
5. That, as a result of this system, the country is overrun with unlearned, incompetent persons licensed to practice medicine, to the serious degradation of the profession and the detriment of the public and welfare.
6. That the existence of this evil has recently been recognized by the legislative authority of the States of Alabama, North Carolina, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and West Virginia, and the remedy applied by the establishment, in each of these commonwealths, of a single licensing body after the form and manner of the faculty which this act would create.
7. That this system of placing the licensing power in the hands of a body directly responsible to the people, and entirely independent of, and disconnected from the teaching bodies, is the one which prevails in almost every civilized country in the world.
8. That the object of this proposed law is to strike at ignorance and incompetency, but that it in no way interferes with freedom of opinion or individuality of doctrine.
9. That, if enacted, it will in no way interfere with any person now engaged in the lawful practice of medicine, inasmuch as it excludes all such persons from its operations.
10. That the proposed law involves the State in no expenditure of money, neither now nor hereafter.
11. That, inasmuch as the evil complained of in this memorial is conceded by all, save those interested in its perpetuation,—and as the plan here proposed is now in successful operation in six different States,—inasmuch as this plan will not disturb any person now engaged in the lawful practice of medicine, and as it works no wrong to any citizen of the State—inasmuch as it imposes no burdens upon the State treasury, and would be simply adopting the usage of other enlightened countries—and inasmuch as its sole object is to secure to the people the services of a worthy and efficient medical profession, in the belief that such services would promote the public health and public welfare,—for these reasons and in the name and behalf of the Medical Society of the County of Erie, we ask your hearty coöperation in the effort to secure the passage of this measure.

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION,

Office, 164 Franklin Street, Buffalo, N. Y.

